CHILD STUDY

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HEADLINES

This issue grows directly out of the actual problems which parents have brought to the Association. The four representative cases are printed with permission and are sufficiently disguised to veil identity.

★

Our Director, Mrs. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, has written the introductory article, and Mrs. Cécile Pilpel, Study Group Director, the editorial. Mrs. Bess B. Lane, Educational Associate with long teaching experience, tells of a school's problem with a child whose parents differed in their views of child raising; Dr. Ruth Brickner, Psychiatrist of the Association's Consultation Service, writes of the child who is pushed beyond his years; and Mrs. Anna W. M. Wolf, Psychiatric Social Worker, reports the effects upon a child of the parental drives and needs. Mrs. Jean Schick Grossman, Parent Education Associate, gives us a story out of her experience with play school parents, and their struggle against environmental odds. Each story, though unique in the personalities involved, reflects an interplay of human relationships in which we may find mirrored our own problems. Popular science is represented in the article by Dr. Milton I. Levine, pediatrician at the City and Country School, who has made a special study of children's posture.

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The immediate future—March—will be devoted to that much-discussed subject, "Money and the Family."

D. D. H.

PARENTAL ATTITUDES

PARENTS' ATTITUDES toward their children are born out of their life experiences and, more particularly, out of their relationships to their own parents. The individual weaves the material of these experiences into the special and distinctive pattern of his own personality.

IF WE have been fortunate in the choice of our parents, we will have a great advantage, for our attitudes toward our partner and our children are permeated by our own early experiences. These attitudes will in turn, however, be very markedly affected by the equally powerful but differing experiences which our partner in marriage brings as a result of his early conditioning, as well as by the kind of children that come to us.

THOUGH loving our children equally well, we may find ourselves naturally attracted more strongly toward one than toward another. And where this attraction is related to traits which we have valued in our marriage partner or respected in ourselves, our relationship with this child is likely to be happier and easier. Conversely, we will tend to react unfavorably if a child presents qualities of the other parent with which we have struggled or, perhaps even harder, those which we have never wished to admit existed in ourselves.

WE AS PARENTS will do well to examine honestly our feelings toward each other and toward our own personality problems. Only then can we see ourselves clearly in relation to our children. If our marriage is fundamentally sound, and if we do not harbor grievances, we will not rationalize personal antagonisms toward one another into differences of opinion concerning the training and education of the children. The personality traits of a particular child will then be considered on their merits uncolored by our often unconscious feelings toward the other parent or by our own inner stresses.

IN OUR keen desire to give our children a sense of security we are likely to strive for uniform attitudes toward them. Emotional security for our children, however, cannot be developed by mere outward conformity on the part of the parents. It grows out of the permeating affection of the parents for one another and for the child. Where this happy state exists, differing parental attitudes, instead of developing into a source of conflict, may become a source of enrichment for our children's lives and our own.

Cécile Pilpel

Parental Attitudes

By SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG

A WELL-KNOWN psychiatrist recently made the observation that in present-day Russia there are very few neurotic symptoms among children or young people. This relative scarcity of neurotics he attributes largely to the fact that changing conditions in that country had all but eliminated unwanted children.

To the extent that the children born are wanted by their parents, the change is no doubt a tremendous gain for all concerned. And the fact is especially important in its bearings upon attitudes of the parents. There is, however, a subtle implication that occurs to one; there is a qualification that has to be considered. Granting that no unwanted children are ever born: do the parents in all cases want the particular child they get? And if not, how do they take it?

The fact that advancing science and changed conditions enlarge the range of our choices complicates the relation of parents and children in other ways. Today, for example, a person is under no obligation to become a parent. For many this simplifies life considerably. For those who do become parents, however, the fact that there is some choice adds to the responsibilities, since it increases the burden of an obligation to feel that one might have avoided it altogether. The result is then a greater anxiety among such parents, an eagerness to do all in their power for their child, an excessive attention to every detail, and a confusing uncertainty as to whether each decision they make is actually the best possible.

The initial problem is to adjust our expectation to what is attainable, and yet not be satisfied to drift passively in abject submission to fate. Wanting a child very often means wanting a boy, or perhaps a girl—and being unprepared for a child of the opposite sex. Or it means wanting a dream child resembling slightly a favorite doll of the early years, and being unprepared for a real child with straight hair of the wrong color.

According to tradition, every mother is assumed to be enchanted by her baby; and undoubtedly many fathers as well as mothers feel a special affection for their own babies from the very beginning. Although many have very strong preferences for a boy or girl, this is largely an abstraction: when the real child appears, most parents find in that real child a source of satisfaction.

Yet the affections manifest themselves in so many ways. Many a mother treats her child as a little girl might treat her doll, coddling and fussing and stuffing as if the child existed merely to let the mother vent her good will and generosity in the most immediate physical ways. Much that she thus does to the child is not only well intentioned but of good effect: for the child needs protection from the first, he needs care and love and attention. But then there is a point beyond which every additional unit of indulgence or attention lowers the net gain in personality growth. Here we see the tying of the famous apron strings, or the spinning of the threads that make up the silver cord.

Motivating Forces

What is it in the father or mother that leads to excessive solicitude for the child, to over-protection, to what has been called "smother-love"? It may be a normal exuberance of genuine affection. Or perhaps it is a compensation for an old resentment against the parents, for imagined or even real neglects. Many move to maturity with a bitterness that finds its solace in the determination to make up for past privations by overloading the child. However well meant and whatever its source, the excessive cares and anxieties for the welfare of the child have the effect of converting him into a convenient instrument for the parents' emotional gratification.

We cannot tell in every case what it is that makes a person behave one way rather than another. But while the attitudes are obviously influenced in their manifestations by the external conditions and the prevailing views and expectations of others, each individual brings with him a body of predispositions and biases that are all of a piece, they are integral parts of the personality. In any situation that arises some of the determination comes from within, or at least from earlier influences, early fixations in the way of

likes and dislikes, in the way of fears and hopes, in the way of strong convictions. In addition, we are influenced by the prevailing beliefs in regard to human nature, human conduct—the convictions that are so characteristic of the climate of opinion. If we think of human beings in terms of original sin, the child's conduct will arouse one set of emotions and a corresponding need for punishment or prayer. If we are convinced that children are little angels who cannot possibly do anything "wrong," we respond differently to the same conduct.

Much of our daily program is more or less automatic routine; but a great deal that appears to be planned and purposeful, especially in our dealing with children and other human beings, is really determined by our basic attitudes and assumptions. This has been repeatedly observed by novelists and historians as well as by philosophers and psychiatrists, who have made us familiar with the idea of "rationalization," the effort to make our conduct appear rational. But we are not always aware in what ways children's basic needs have to be met at the same time that we try to propitiate a world which puts a premium upon reason and reasonableness.

This conflict we can see in some of the outcomes of the effort made by parents to avail themselves of expert advice in the care of their children. The best advice has to be moderate and balanced, and the best use of advice has to be intelligent and balanced. Thus, parents are told that they should not fondle the baby excessively—but the baby needs their affection. They must not help the baby too much—but he needs to experience success. They must give the child his independence—but he needs also security and protection. From all these teachings many parents are able to derive some insight into child nature and some help in problems of management. Others, however, merely find in these pronouncements sanction for their own impulses. The mother whose own emotional needs require that she keep her child bound fast to her finds in the authorities justification for doing so. The parent who had already emotionally rejected his parenthood finds it easy to give the child "independence"—as directed by the book. Still others, insecure and unwilling to trust their own judgment, are ready to abdicate all common sense, all responsibility, in a slavish acceptance of any authoritative set of rules.

The attitudes which parents preserve from their own childhood, and those which they develop during their years as parents, are significant because they affect both the day by day relations with their children and the children's later attitudes and adjustments. We are constantly warned that we must not live out our lives through our children: that they should be given a chance to live their own lives, develop their own personalities. Yet there are many parents who take for granted that their children will carry out the family pattern—as in the choice of an occupation, the place and style of residence, the social set, and so on.

The counterpart to this stubborn clinging to the children in order to make them continue the parents' lives is seen in the waiving of all convictions, with the corresponding evasion of responsibility. Warned not to insist too firmly upon family traditions and personal preferences, and knowing nothing else to offer the children, many parents leave the children to their own resources, let them drift without guidance. But it is not necessary to choose between imposing our own views and desires on the one hand, and leaving the children without the benefit of mature experience and counsel on the other.

A similar conflict often appears in the attitudes of parents toward changing moralities and values. We cannot stick to the old merely because it is old; but neither can we abandon practices and ideals merely because they bear the stamp of traditional approval. Nor can we pretend that, since customs and morals have always been in flux, it does not matter what we believe or how we conduct ourselves. For these things do matter, and are likely to matter still more during the lives of our children. We may not be able to evaluate either current customs or the traditional ones; but we can make clear the foundations of our own convictions, whatever they are. At present, with conflicting ideals and prejudices from so many different sources striking every alert boy and girl, there is pressing need to help the children see what is implied by various types of attitudes toward persons as persons, toward institutions, toward the carrying of responsibility. Parents need, in fact, to make sure which of their cherished principles are precious because they are familiar, and which are important because they strike down to the roots of human relations and our common welfare.

Unity Transcends Family Differences

Developments since the beginning of the century have tended to emphasize the worth of the individual, whether child or adult. In accordance with this trend parents have been exhorted to cultivate their

own individualities, to assert themselves as persons. In the interest of the child, however, parents are urged to present a united front. Now it is a commonplace that vital personalities, even with the greatest regard for each other, and with the deepest affection, are bound to differ at many points. How are the personalities which constitute a child's parents going to present a united front without one or both subordinating their individualities? Here is another problem in the adjustment of attitudes through a search for the essentials. In the home unity is maintained neither by accepting the domination of the powerful nor by avoiding matters about which there are differences. To a degree this type of conflict can be met by a division of labor—the father speaks authoritatively on business or politics, the mother on school matters and social form. But only to a limited degree. As the children grow older, more and more of their interests must be drawn into the area of parental disagreements. And yet the home need be neither a constant battlefield nor a place where important issues are never raised. It should be rather an arena in which important issues are constantly under review by persons who love and respect each other and who are more concerned with clarifying issues than they are with vindicating their own prejudices, or converting their adversaries.

The attitudes of parents are themselves undergoing change. It is not necessary, in the many situations that give us a choice between two impossible solutions, to accept either. It is possible in most cases to find a working compromise. It is for the parents to inquire how much stimulation and direction a particular child needs, to find where encouragement is needed, where restraint. There may be exceptional circumstances, or exceptional individuals; but, generally speaking, it should not be necessary for parents who are really concerned to choose between coercing a child into a predetermined course, and neglecting him to go his own way. The important thing is for all concerned to accept the fact of conflict as in the nature of things, and then to seek constructive ways of dealing with conflicts.

The Challenge of Choice

The technical and social changes that have been going on in our own times place at our disposal resources that we are unable to use satisfactorily. Having choices gives us the feeling of enrichment; but making decisions deprives us of so much, leaves unused so many items which we might have chosen, that we feel deprived. Parenthood itself, for example, has in the past defined a large part of a woman's adult life. Today the household tasks connected with rearing a family are not only simplified by new devices and reduced by the shrinkage in the number of children, they are of a kind that cannot absorb the intelligence and energies of a fairly competent woman, except for a comparatively few years, until the youngest child is off to school. She wants to be a person as well as a mother, a better wife perhaps than her mother had a chance to be. She wants to share in a variety of civic and cultural activities that were a generation ago restricted to the privileged few. With the many stimulations and temptations of our variegated world, what does parenthood offer her?

Old Relationships on New Levels

With the extension of our span of years more and more individuals retain a variety of relationships within the family. Adult men and women remain in their filial status while they are already parents, or even grandparents. And one needs to carry out the obligations of each of these many relationships, not merely a good parent, or a good son: we have to be pretty good in many different ways. In fact, one of the sources of present-day complexity is precisely this: that we live in many more kinds of relationships outside the family than people ever did before. And with the high standards that we have been forced to set ourselves by the rapid expansion of our material and cultural resources, it becomes increasingly difficult for the individual to keep up with all the demands —that he makes on himself.

Nobody is satisfied to be merely a good father: he has to be at the same time a good husband. It is not enough to be a good provider; one has to be also a good companion, a good citizen. Failures are not due so much to a deterioration of the race, or a weakening of our fiber, as to the fact that we have expanded our vision of what is humanly possible, without at the same time having adjusted our personal ambitions and standards to what is individually attainable. Perhaps the attitude that will most help to color and enrich the entire relationship between parents and children is that of searching realistically for the best that parents may expect of themselves and of their children. Being realistic means not only that we shall accept the inherent limitations in ourselves, our resources, and our children but also that we shall explore and cultivate all the potentialities for better living.

Too Good

By ANNA W. M. WOLF

MRS. KUHN began her recital apologetically. David, her six-year-old child, was, she said, as lovely a son as she could imagine. In him all her hopes had been fulfilled for he was intelligent, fine to look at, affectionate, and obedient. She and her husband had lavished the utmost in thought and care upon him, having his moral welfare no less deeply at heart than his physical. It was, she explained, only because her ideals were so high that she came. Her child was so near to being all her heart could desire that she could not bear to have him fall short in even the slightest way. He had been trained to share his toys, to give even his favorite possessions to a playmate—and he had always complied in the sweetest way. Twice recently, however, after parting with something, he had flown at the recipient, buried his teeth in his hand, and then burst into a flood of weeping. These manifestations, coupled with a high degree of sensitiveness, suddenly alarmed his mother. In school, she reported, his written work and his conduct were excellent, but when called upon to recite he would suddenly hang his head and flush, even when it was clear that he knew the answer. His teacher, exasperated, called him stubborn, and his mother more than once had to explain that it was David's unusually "high standards" which held him back. For example, he was asked one day if he knew why the flags were at half mast and he refused to answer at all because, while he knew the general meaning of this custom, he was ignorant of the name of the particular person who had died.

It appeared too that he had suffered from time to time from fear of loud noises—fire engines, thunder storms, automobile back-firing—and that night terrors occurred occasionally, sometimes as often as twice or three times a week.

David's appearance is striking—fine dark eyes in an oval face, pale olive in color. He is a bit too slender for his height, but wiry and active. His expression is serious and rather too intense, but he can see a humorous or whimsical twist to things in a manner rather unusual for his age. He delights in drawing and shows considerable ability in that line. The impression he gives is one of delicacy, physical as well as temperamental, and he has, indeed, had a long history of disease. He had pneumonia at eight months and later whooping cough, ear infections, tonsillectomy. At three and a half he fell while playing and hit his face against a curb stone. The accident resulted in a gash across the face and was the starting point for the fears and nightmares. His general frailty seemed accentuated after this event and he has been more subject to passing infections than the average child. Temperamentally he has been docile and easily managed and highly sensitive to parental disapproval. Punishments have been unnecessary, a look from his mother being enough to cause him to flush guiltily and bring about compliance. The unusual degree of neatness about his person and possessions suggests a much older person. To a child who smeared one of his toys with clay, he merely remarked: "You need never come to my house again."

There is a striking similarity between mother and son. As a child she had the same amenable disposition that he has, the same gentle, spiritual quality which distinguishes her today, somehow setting her definitely apart from average humanity.

A Loving Family

She was the youngest of a large and closely knit Jewish family which possessed a strong conviction of its high standards and, although relatively poor, conscientiously maintained higher moral and educational standards than its neighbors. Her father, not very successful in business, was a pious Hebrew scholar, with a mind studious but conventional; the mother more practical and shrewd. In this closely-knit home, Mrs. Kuhn was the favored darling, the pearl among all the children, beautiful, intelligent, and virtuous—beloved of all. She, on her part, accepted this position "with humility," conscious only of a desire not to betray those who trusted her and to play her rôle well. Kind toward whoever would accept it, rigid in her moral standards, always admired, sometimes loved, she got peculiar satisfaction from championing the under-dog. For example, in spite of her popularity at college, she made herself the patroness of those who were not admitted to clubs, refusing to join one herself. She was strongly influenced by a much older brother who had strict

ideas and proved very exacting in his demands about whom she should and should not be permitted to associate with; and Dora yielded unquestioningly to his decision. This brother (who never married) was the moral pace-setter for the family, enunciating a high code, particularly in matters sexual, and scrutinizing with skepticism any young man who might glance interestedly in his sister's direction.

At eighteen she met Mr. Kuhn, five years older than herself, a friend and great admirer of her brother. He came from a family lower in the social scale, and in which intellectual interests were nonexistent. His mother, embittered by poverty and struggle following the death of a husband she had never loved, became querulous, harsh, and unreasonable, so that to the young man this large, high-thinking, loyal family was a revelation of a totally different and, for him, an ennobling way of life. He was intensely happy and grateful at being received as a friend into such a family, and when his affection for Dora ripened into love, it seemed natural to him that they should hesitate to give her to him. He was quite willing to "earn his claim" and to demonstrate through industry his capacity to provide for her.

Subtle Pressures

As a matter of fact, Dora's family looked decidedly askance at what they recognized as the probable outcome, feeling that their darling was far too good for a penniless and so far undistinguished young man. His education had been limited; he was without financial prospects and his mother was all too obviously a bad-mannered woman who had shown herself unappreciative of honors which, as a family, they had bestowed upon her son. Dora, despite her parents' tact, was painfully conscious of their attitude. It hurt her deeply, not only that they failed to see the man she loved in the light that she did but even more that because of her choice she was falling short of the ideal for her which they had cherished. Nevertheless, she had given her love and for her that was an act intensely sacred and binding. But the opposition she encountered was the harder to cope with because it was only indirectly expressed and because, as a family, they knew how to put pressure on one another so subtly that it was scarcely discernible.

Dora married the young man after a friendship of five years and a courtship nearly as long. Both were patient and the family gradually grew accustomed to the idea. Moreover, Mr. Kuhn had, through Dora's influence with a well-to-do cousin, established himself in business and demonstrated what perseverance and good sense can accomplish. In the intervening years Dora had taken a teacher's license and secured a position which she held until a year after her marriage when she became a mother. She welcomed her boy with slight misgivings for she had definitely wanted a daughter to whom she felt she would feel closer than to a male child. As he grew older, she noted with satisfaction that he had the delicate and fine features of a girl. When his face was injured at the time of the accident, her first thoughts were fears lest his beauty be permanently marred for she had set to work from the start, though all unconsciously, to recreate him in her own image—the perfect child—aristocratic, conscientious, amenable to her teachings, and she intended to bequeath to him the moral qualities with which she herself had been surrounded. David gave ample promise of proving himself a worthy disciple and received from his parents an intense but exacting type of love to which he was acutely sensitive. It is of rather striking interest that the second son is of a wholly different order and has thus far developed into a wholesome, happy, naughty, robust young animal to whom both parents, though they love and cherish him, are less deeply attached; David continues to engage their imaginations and emotions first and foremost.

Carrying on Traditions

Mr. and Mrs. Kuhn are striving to perpetuate the standards and atmosphere of Dora's old home. They are harmonious in their attitude toward the children, mentally congenial and, as far as can be ascertained, sexually compatible. Mr. Kuhn had been chaste until his marriage, a fact in which his wife takes a high degree of satisfaction. Through familiarity with many births and marriages in the intimate circle of her own family, her early acquaintance of the Jewish ritual of *mikvah*, by which women cleanse themselves in a special pool after menstruation and after childbirth, these limited aspects of many sexual matters were part of the common knowledge acquired in growing up. Later her college studies in physiology further extended her information. Her attitude, however, and that which she imposed on all for whom she cared, was rigorously chaste and deeply influenced by a brother whose own adjustment to this code was a life of celibacy.

It is not often that a parent comes to a guidance

clinic because a child is "too good." The reality of the problems involved in being too good are not immediately apparent and all of our habitual morality has so lauded the qualities of kindness, gentleness, unselfishness, etc., that it takes a more revolutionary kind of thinking to realize that in certain forms they are actual defects. Mrs. Kuhn sought advice, therefore, not because David was too good (he was) but because of her distress that his perfect goodness could suddenly break down. There is possibly a valid reason for the average person's distrust of too much goodness, which must be centered in the feeling that it too effectively cloaks selfish trends in character. Such people are wont to exert a gentle but persistent pressure on the lives of others; they coerce us before we know it and without ever laying their cards on the table; and above all they often can be cruel without anyone, including themselves, recognizing it as anything but kindness or high-mindedness.

These had always been the methods of Dora's family, and Dora herself was the perfect flower of this particular plant. She had never suffered a set-back until she fell in love and felt the sting of their concealed weapons. During her engagement she sought to atone—that is, more accurately, to win back the slightly impaired position of perfection in the family and the unconditional love and approval of her brother which had been hers up to this time. Mr. Kuhn's business success was not on a scale quite substantial enough to impress them, though he himself gained considerable self-assurance when he discovered that in his own group he was respected and singled out for positions of responsibility. Still her mother sighed for the "brilliant" marriage her daughter might have made. Meanwhile, as a young wife, Dora planned how to impress her friends so that they would carry away word of the success and beauty of her marriage; and what more natural, when a child came, than that she should look to it eagerly as the proof of her rightness in marrying as she had. The perfect child is vindication enough of any marriage.

In Her Own Image

She had hoped for a girl, partly because she could understand feminine perfection, knowing it so well at first hand—partly because an unconscious hostility to her husband, for robbing her of the complete approval of her family, carried over to a son who should be in his image. It seems certain that when a son came, she hastened all unaware, but as rapidly as possible, to make him into her image—even, so far as she was able, as to sex. She noted with joy his femininity of feature, calling it "aristocratic," and she assiduously cultivated the gentler and self-effacing attributes which may have been already at hand in David's nature. She watched over his every move and hung over his school reports. His excellence thrilled her—an error, and she was dejected. To him "the pained look" was heavier than the proverbial switch. With love and with veiled threats of the withdrawal of love, with "high standards" and with virtue incarnate, she controlled him completely until little was left of normal little boy aggressiveness except unaccountable moods of stubbornness and impotent bursts of rage. Night terrors were telling the tale of inner tension and conflict, and Mrs. Kuhn was frightened only when all this perfection showed signs of cracking and spoiling the offering which she was making to her family to atone for the sin of marrying a man who was not quite one of them. Somewhere within her she seemed to know that she was making use of David for her own private purposes, and it was a sense of guilt at this unconscious knowledge that drove her to seek relief and reassurance in psychiatric advice.

While it is true that changes in procedure with children are most effective as the result of increased insight—a new vision of what one is about—the reality of such insight is forever problematic. Mothers expect and require for their immediate needs concrete advice to put into immediate practice. And insight, if it is attained at all, usually comes later in the inquiry and, partly at least, because relief from the tensions with which they came makes it possible to admit facts which were formerly shunned.

Reconstruction Along New Lines

As early as the first interview, it was suggested to Mrs. Kuhn that her standards were beyond both the possible and the desirable for childhood, and that she would need to relax in the matter of so much personal control. Certain immediate practical suggestions were therefore in order: that David should not be urged to give his toys to other children, nor share them beyond the normal bounds of learning to give and take; that on the contrary he be encouraged to defend intrusions upon his property with behavior more effectual than biting; that relative indifference as to his report card should be maintained, and his mother refrain altogether from helping him with homework which had been the occasion of tears and tension. Nearly all mothers are

unfit for this particular task, and Mrs. Kuhn, in view of the intensity of her desire that her son should excel, was particularly so. In regard to nail-biting, an ever present problem, she was urged to abandon the attitude "you are too big a boy," etc., and the sense of moral humiliation which, as the best one of her family, she so readily brought into play. It was suggested that she explain that she knew just how hard it was to break this habit and did not expect it all at once; that she knew lots of children who had done it who grew up into fine people and usually learned to break themselves of the habit. Aggressiveness adequate to sustain one's self-respect and the special need for it in a male child was represented to her as a positive virtue, and ways and means were discussed in the assumption that she had grasped this principle and needed the psychiatrist largely to help in the practical attainment of it. When she gave her own history and her husband's and some of the sources of her desire for a "perfect child" as she herself put it, she became interested in it, and much time was expended in developing her understanding of David's rage in relation to her demands upon him. She was also able to recall tempers and weeping of her own of which she had forgotten the causes and had never been able to account for since her parents were "always so kind and just." It was explained to her that David lived in a state of tension due to her demands upon him which were wholly inappropriate to his years, and that, instead of helping him to develop the vigorous independence which she verbally insisted was her purpose, she was, through the unspoken threat of the withdrawal of love, tyrannizing over him and making him subservient.

She was frightened, too, when she realized to what extent she had cultivated feminine qualities and had managed to eliminate self-assertion, boisterousness, disorderliness, and a respect for obvious primitive virtues characteristic of normal boyhood. She believed that she understood the mistakes she had made, even how she had been using David as a tool, by producing in him the kind of perfection which her family had set store by, for proving the rightness of her marriage.

The altered régime soon brought rather definite results. David opened his eyes rather wide when told by his mother that he need not give any of his toys to his cousin when he came to spend the day; and it so happened that the same cousin tried hard to persuade him to part with a cherished engine. David had picked it up and departed with it to a chair near his mother, where he sat glancing anxiously at her as she replied negatively to the young cousin's suggestions. Later she reported that this new sanction for maintaining possession tended to run away with him. When a visitor admired a toy, he would seize it hastily exclaiming, "Yes, but you can't have it!" or "If you take it, I'll smack your face—I'll kill you!" A new problem arose in connection with peaceable sharing toward which, however, Mrs. Kuhn found herself capable of acting patiently and with understanding.

At school his A grades fell to B. Mrs. Kuhn sighed about that when she talked to the psychiatrist, but refrained from comments at home. The teacher admitted that David seemed less stubborn about recitations and socially less subdued, but the usual school teacher rarely values these achievements above a neat spelling paper, and it was hard for Mrs. Kuhn to hear her recital of complaints with equanimity.

Mrs. Kuhn had already been turning over in her mind the possibility of preparing herself to return to school teaching. In this plan it seemed wise to encourage her heartily. Interests and ambitions of her own would be useful in diverting to herself some of the intense absorption with which she now approached David. While we knew her, she began to work and ultimately received her license. Her profession absorbs her sufficiently so that David is much freer to be himself. She has less time for him, and the question of his perfection is not quite so important since her own is once more challenged. She has a better perspective and a new liking for the real little boys whom she encounters in her own classes—a growing dislike of priggishness.

The Right to Protest

A distinct victory was won in an encounter with her husband. The doctor had made fun of David for running into his parents' room after a terrifying nightmare—these have decreased noticeably—and David had flown into a temper and flung a block at him. Mrs. Kuhn, somewhat off her guard and exhausted from having nursed a sick child for a fortnight, seized David, spanked him, and then retired to let her husband finish the job as he saw fit. Several days later David remarked to his father, "You forgot to ask me something," and continued, "I threw a block at the doctor. I spilled ink on my arithmetic. I forgot to put away the meccano——." Mrs. Kuhn learned that since the block throwing episode her husband had required him each day to give a recital of his

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Independence — for Whom?

By RUTH BRICKNER, M.D.

CHARLES was five and a half years old when his mother came to the Consultation Service for help. She said that the main problem was one of constant dawdling during all the daily routines. Charles was slow in eating, especially his breakfast, dawdled in dressing, and had been late to school every day for a week prior to the time she came for a consultation. On one occasion he had been found in a neighbor's yard during school time.

About four months before the first interview, his parents had come firmly to the decision that Charles should be "put on his own" in regard to these routines. His should be the daily responsibility for carrying them out, and for suffering the consequences of failures in punctuality. Their disappointment at the child's response was great. The dawdling and indifference continued. Moreover, his attitude in school was an additional disappointment. Though Charles has an excellent intelligence, his work did not satisfy his parents, who had hoped that he would be the kind of child who was mechanically resourceful, a creative builder, an active leader, a doer. Instead they found him very verbal, ready at explaining things to his companions, but holding aloof from their working projects. He was interested mainly in books, stories, and conversation. His parents' theory has been that, if they insisted on his learning how to do his daily routines alone and unaided, it would help to develop more interest in his surroundings and counteract the tendency toward day-dreaming and verbalizing.

Further difficulties which Mrs. Nelson reported included such things as Charles' sucking his thumb and picking his nose. This latter practice, she said, "drives me to distraction," and she admitted nagging him constantly in an effort to suppress it. It was still necessary to take him up at eleven o'clock in the evening if he was to remain dry during the night, and very occasionally he wet himself in the daytime.

Charles' general health had never been very good. He was born a few weeks prematurely, weighing only four pounds. There was considerable difficulty with his nursing and subsequent nutrition, and at four months of age he had an acute intestinal attack which made the first summer a difficult one. At the time of the interviews he was thin, but strong and well built; subject, however, to frequent colds with bronchitis. Emotionally he appeared to be well controlled; his early fears had been few, and handled with understanding by his mother. When two years old, the sudden appearance of a noisy tractor on the street frightened him severely. His mother carried him out to look at it again, and they talked it over together. The original fear overcome, the strange machine soon aroused his interest and his immediate anxiety disappeared, but it was several months before he was willing to play alone on the section of the front lawn where he had been standing at the time of his original fright.

The Mother's Early Life

Mrs. Nelson was thirty-one when we made her acquaintance. Small and wiry, serious and intense in her manner, she gave an immediate impression of intelligence and of the requisite stability to profit by an inquiry directed toward the roots of her own as well as her children's difficulties.

Her father had come to America from Germany as a young man and, after establishing himself as a manufacturer, married a distant German relative, and settled in a small town near New York. Mrs. Nelson was the younger of two children.

She attended the public high school, where she stood at the head of her class in scholarship, and was a leader in literary and other extra-curricular activities. The home was a happy one, the parents being devoted both to each other and to their children. Early in childhood, her father became her ideal. He was a man who took great interest in problems of social welfare and had radical ideas concerning international relations and the relations of capital and labor. He was much admired by his friends and business associates; and his daughter, who was his favorite child, was deeply influenced by his personality and his ideas.

Practical experience in the world of affairs presented itself in the management of the bakery business which her father had established and in which she had a part interest with her older brother. In the early days of this venture, she had violent disagreements with her brother who did not share the liberal notions concerning industrial relations which she so passionately advocated. Later, when each had

had more experience, they adjusted their difficulties amicably. Indeed, the friction between them proved valuable, each learning from the other; and their relationship today is one of mutual liking and respect for each other's capacities.

Contrasting Family Backgrounds

In contrast to this close-knit, happy, and responsible family group, Mr. Nelson, Charles' father, had lost his mother at the age of six, and lived with his sister in the homes of several cousins successively, and finally in a boarding home. The people who cared for him during his early years did so either because of conventional family obligations, or because they were paid for it. His father was a man of considerable intelligence and force, with artistic interests. He, too, had theories about the social system, but also a very opinionated and domineering temperament, lacking in the gentleness and natural wisdom of Mrs. Nelson's father. Although devoted to his children and particularly interested in their cultural development, his autocratic manner antagonized his son. Little emotional warmth existed between the two, and conflicts were frequent.

Mr. Nelson left school early to take a business course, and soon after he had joined a business firm, became its general manager. His acquaintance with the family of Mrs. Nelson led him to enter her father's business in which he is still engaged, deeply absorbed in his work and showing much energy and initiative.

From the time when she was a young girl, a life devoted to work in behalf of social reform appealed much more to Mrs. Nelson's ambitious and adventure-loving nature than a career of domesticity, though she was not lacking in suitors. Mr. Nelson became interested in her while she was still a young girl, and she felt that their greatest bond was a common interest in social problems and in the cause of peace and pacifism. However, she postponed marriage for several years. When her family suffered business reverses, she took up stenography, finishing her high school course at night. She secured a satisfying job in a field which she felt could advance the cause of peace and social justice.

Mr. Nelson's subsequent history seems to have been a gradual lessening of his interest in social revolution and greater and greater absorption in business interests. He seemed to his wife to emphasize individualism rather than social cooperation and to take a somewhat contemptuous attitude toward his associates. There was an increasing tendency to play a lone hand and irritation at the prevalence of "bunk" in business. His other interests appeared to be largely athletic, and his tendency was to handle personal problems with the same efficiency and common sense with which he handled his work. His wife and family satisfied him, although in his relationships to them he seemed overcontrolled and undemonstrative. Toward the two children he was scrupulously just, providing generously for their amusements as well as for their education. He was very insistent upon the importance of self-reliance. The family have lived in a house in a New York suburb where Charles and his little sister, with whom he is usually happy and toward whom he takes a protective attitude, have a delightful play yard and adequate facilities of all kinds for their development.

Motherhood Interrupts a Career

Mrs. Nelson had always expected to go on with her work after their marriage and did so for several years, but during an interval when her job happened to be rather uninteresting she decided to "take time off and have a family." She "hardly noticed" her pregnancy, never mentioned it to her friends until it became necessary, and left most of the purchase of baby clothing to her mother. After her delivery she "felt nothing at all" for the child; rather her love grew quietly and imperceptibly; there was at the same time a sense of dismay at the demands, physical and emotional, that motherhood made upon her. Her physical vitality had often seemed inadequate to these demands, and a burden of fatigue and strain weighed her down. In addition, a feeling of disappointment at her husband's growing philistinism and his loss of idealism had gradually been coming to consciousness.

Mrs. Nelson must be considered in a sense psychologically unprepared for motherhood. The ideals which she had held as a young girl revolved mainly around a career and the vision of herself serving some important social purpose. Her close relationship with her father had helped to build and keep alive these strivings, and the friends she met through her work had only a secondary and very theoretical interest in the problems of parenthood. Her pregnancy, though planned, meant little to her other than the next step in an intellectually conceived program, and she described it as having been a negligible emotional experience, altering the course of her life very little. Her husband's feelings were essentially the same. There were, however, important differences between them. Mrs. Nelson had come from a family

where the relationship between parents and children and between husband and wife was unusually closely knit. Therefore, when she was herself called upon to assume responsibilities toward her children the family pattern of her early years reasserted itself, and her adjustment to the unexpected physical and emotional demands which her children made upon her was accomplished with a fair degree of success despite the shock of a great change and her resentment at the fatigue involved. However, her acceptance of the mother rôle at first encountered serious obstacles from her strong ambitions in other fields. Not until motherhood was actually upon her did she consciously and seriously consider the emotional meaning it might have for her, or what practical reorganization of her life it might involve. It is at moments of this kind that the unconscious patterns of early experience weigh so critically and usually serve to turn the tide in one direction or the other.

Mr. Nelson, on the contrary, had grown up with no experience in the meaning and fruitfulness of real family living. The loss of his mother at an early age produced a serious curtailment in his psychic equipment. The close relationship with his father was poisoned by the latter's arbitrary and autocratic manner, and served merely to inhibit whatever impulses of a personal and affectionate order might otherwise have developed. Naturally an assertive personality, he was forced to over-react in order to gain emotional independence from the oppressive force of his father's domination, and became a man who emphasized action, ruthlessness, and business-like achievement.

Shifting the Burden

Although responsible and intelligent, Mr. Nelson therefore was not a type to get much spontaneous satisfaction from his children at this age. He felt that his duty had been done in providing the best physical and educational opportunities. When their problems threatened to become too pressing and to interfere with his own comfort, he was ready with a theory whereby they might be dismissed. It was his idea that Charles at the age of five and a half should take the fifteen-minute walk to school alone. He had principles about "independence" in children. When he found his wife too tired in the mornings to give them supervision with their dressing and breakfast, he found that he believed that the children should attend to all these matters for themselves.

Mrs. Nelson accepted her husband's point of view in these things, partly because it fitted in with her own inevitable resentments toward her children for having proved an unexpected physical and psychological burden; partly, too, because she was anxious to diminish points of disagreement between herself and her husband. Increasingly disappointed because of his gradual abandonment of his old interest in social problems, she compared him continually, no doubt, with her own father, to whose standards she unconsciously expected him to measure up. She resented also his lack of interest in family problems, feeling that she was the sufferer thereby, and his too great readiness to find a plausible justification for behavior which was fundamentally inconsiderate had not deceived her. He excused his indifference to the children's legitimate demands upon his time on the grounds that children do not derive much benefit from contact with their parents and that "he did not wish to be a burden to his children, as his father was to him." He professed to favor the point of view of Soviet Russia (or his conception of it) in the bringing up of children.

The constancy of Mrs. Nelson's fatigue, for which no medical causes could be found, may well have been the result of the discrepancy between her husband-ideal, built upon the personality structure of her own father, and her husband-in-reality. She had, however, during the past few years, been learning to accept her children as one of the dominant forces in her life, and temporarily to subordinate her interests in social causes to their problems. The real devotion and seriousness which she had brought to these social problems as a younger woman now stood her in good stead in the more personal situations at hand. By the close of the study, she could see clearly the reasons behind their undue demands for independence in Charles, and that these demands were at the root of his difficulties. It was now possible for her to accept the idea that too much was being expected of a five and a half-year-old boy, so that she no longer considered him or herself a failure because he did not get off to school on time without supervision, or walk straight to the school house without dawdling. Charles' presence in a neighbor's yard during school hours now appeared as a natural consequence of their having expected too much of him. Above all came the realization that these exaggerated ideals for the children's independence had actually been designed to meet the parents' needs, rather than the children's. Consequently she now accepted and put into practice the idea that a certain amount of supervision in matters of eating and

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The Twig Resists

By JEAN SCHICK GROSSMAN

EVELYN MILLER entered a New York summer play school when she was eight and a half years old. It did not take her teacher long to recognize in Evelyn a child in need of help—and her behavior in school was especially perplexing because the girl seemed to have the potentialities of becoming a valuable and happy member of the group. Miss Gray reported that on two occasions Evelyn had run away when on class outings, causing much anxiety to the teacher and the other children until she was finally found. Evelyn never could give any reason for these side-trips and, after each disappearance, had promised never to run away again.

It seemed hard for Evelyn to get along with any of the other girls and boys whom she constantly provoked by her intolerant and overcritical attitude. The teacher thought of her as an insecure child—fearful, in some vague and intangible way. She remembered that once when she had offered to treat all the children to a merry-go-round ride (while on an outing to Coney Island) Evelyn had been the only member of the group who refused to go. She had observed too that on trips the child seemed constantly to be on the lookout for her older sister Mary, whose group often went with them on the same outings. In fact, Evelyn seemed to look for assurance and to be excessively dependent on this sister.

The teacher described Evelyn as an intelligent and capable child with a wistful and bewildering appeal in her large, brown eyes. There were many activities in the play school program which Evelyn enjoyed, since she was skillful with her hands and liked to work with clay, paint, and wood. But her interests were likely to be short lived. Most of the time she was restless and ill-at-ease. On one occasion the girl had expressed a very strong preference for play school as against her regular school, because in play school one was not oppressed by routine school work. This was surprising since there was nothing to indicate that Evelyn did not measure up mentally to the other children of her age at school.

When Evelyn's mother was invited by the parent education counsellor to come for an interview at the play school, she arrived promptly. Mrs. Miller was a tall, imposing-looking woman, singularly erect of carriage, well-groomed, friendly, obviously interested in and devoted to her children, and aggressively eager to cooperate with the school staff. She expressed her appreciation of the play school's interest in her two children and stated that she greatly valued the privilege of sending them to such a "good place." She then elaborated on her own high standards for her children, pointing out that she and her husband were "very particular" about where their children went, and with whom. Times were hard, and this was such a bad neighborhood in which to raise a family!

She was asked how Evelyn got along outside of the play school, and replied that, although she was really a "very good girl," she did give her some concern, mainly because she was not doing as well in school as her older sister. But this, she hastened to add, was due to the fact that Evelyn's teachers didn't really understand her. The child was so sensitive, and so easily upset when family problems were being discussed. It did not at all surprise Mrs. Miller to hear that Evelyn was having difficulty in getting along with her play school classmates. She realized that the girl had no real friends, but how could she have many in such a neighborhood?

Mrs. Miller admitted that she herself was so busy with her household tasks, her "sick man," and the care of the two children, and so burdened by financial worries that perhaps she had not given as much thought to Evelyn's difficulties as she should have. It was necessary, at this point, to reassure Mrs. Miller that there seemed to be no reason to feel she had been neglectful. For it was obvious that Mrs. Miller intended to go right home and "do something" drastic about Evelyn's conduct. She seemed so determined to act immediately—one could not but be impressed by her powerful, forcefully aggressive personality. She was told some of the pleasanter things about her daughter—the teacher's high regard for Evelyn, and her faith in her potentialities. At this she heaved a sigh of relief, and became more relaxed.

The Home Picture

When it was suggested to her that a picture of Evelyn and her home might help the school staff to give her a better summer's experience, the mother seemed delighted to talk about herself and her family.

Mrs. Miller's listener had hardly expected to learn so much in this first interview; she had reckoned without the mother's narrative gifts, her joy in self-expression, and her evident need to unburden herself.

Evelyn was the younger of two children, her older sister being nearly thirteen. The parents had come from Russia about a year after the birth of the older child. Mrs. Miller painted a glowing picture of her childhood home. It sounded almost too idyllic. It was, she said, one of rare charm and beauty where the atmosphere was definitely "cultured." Education had always meant everything to her father, and he had spared no expense for private tutors and special schools to give his children every possible educational opportunity. She had been considered an excellent pupil, and was a very attractive girl. (This, she admitted laughingly, did sound a bit vain, but it was nevertheless true.) Her father's sudden death, followed by her mother's remarriage, had meant the end of all her dreams for self-fulfillment. She had married to escape the misery of living in the once-loved, now bitterly hated home. She had known Mr. Miller only slightly before her marriage, but happily she had found him a man whom she could both respect and love. Except for her fears because of his rather frail health, she entered upon her marriage confident of a return of the happiness of her girlhood days. With a little capital, they emigrated to America where Mr. Miller became a small shopkeeper. At first he was able to earn a good living and things began to look bright again; but hard times came soon. Her husband's health became increasingly poor (he had a persistent cough), the family was obliged to move from "uptown" to a downtown tenement house neighborhood, and here they were with their two children, a small and uncertain income (fifteen to eighteen dollars a week), and all the plans for esthetic surroundings and superior educational opportunities for her children shattered by economic difficulties. But Mrs. Miller declared that she was not one to complain. ("Thank God, we're not on relief!" she exclaimed. *That* she could never endure!)

Her Duty As She Saw It

She saw her duty plainly, and she was doing it to the best of her ability. She realized, she said quite frankly, that she and her family were vastly superior to her neighbors, and that friends could be chosen only with the greatest caution, that she must be constantly on the lookout against the bad influences of the neighborhood and try unceasingly to compensate to her children for the deprivations with which they were all now faced. Happily, her older daughter, Mary, was a wonderful student. She loved to talk with her "by the hour" on intellectual matters, and every day she carefully looked over both girls' homework. All her teachers loved Mary, and she was such a help with the younger girl. "She keeps Evelyn straight" was the way Mrs. Miller put it. In their home there were American library books and foreign literature "all over the house." Only the best radio programs were permitted, the rooms must always look "just so" and a clean dress every day for both girls was the rule of the house, no matter how weary she might be.

Mrs. Miller was glad when the parent education counsellor suggested that they might work together on Evelyn's problems. She responded eagerly and talked again about the fact that ever since she had moved into the district she had felt herself superior to the neighborhood. She had not even tried to make friends among her neighbors, although she did maintain a distantly polite friendliness. She dressed fastidiously and kept an immaculate home, sent her children to school looking neater than many of the others, and, in every way, continually drew upon her intelligence, her organizing skill, and her efficiency to maintain a well-run household and keep her family looking "fit." But along with all this outward perfection, an undercurrent of constant dissatisfaction was present. She complained a good deal about her lot, and did a great deal of eloquent reminiscing about the good old days. There were frequent speeches to the children about the need for rigid economy, and exhortation on how they should ever be mindful of their forefathers' superiority and prove themselves worthy of their heritage.

Capitalizing Assets

In the beginning it was difficult to talk with Mrs. Miller about concrete things, to get at any facts about day to day procedures with the children because of her marked preference for what might be called philosophic or academic discussions. Later, this tendency was somewhat overcome.

The counsellor made it a point to observe Evelyn in her play school group. As the summer went on, the girl gradually showed signs of improvement, and Miss Gray tried to help her make a real place for herself as one of the group. She gave her the recognition due her fine manual achievements, helped her to work toward making real contributions to the group project, and exerted very little pressure when Evelyn showed signs of losing interest in the activity.

She found that Evelyn enjoyed occasional trips to the play school library, where she could go off by herself now and then and read quietly, and that she took pleasure in helping some of the younger children, assisting in arranging their cots for rest periods, and setting the tables for their mid-day lunch. She responded warmly to the young kindergarten teacher's recognition of these services. There were no more running-away episodes and there were no more real quarrels with the other children, although Evelyn continued to remain something of an outsider. On the whole it was felt that the summer's experience had helped Evelyn a good deal, and the settlement worker was glad to offer her the opportunity to join some of the fall and winter play groups where Evelyn could continue her craft and wood work and use the settlement library books. She was also invited to join a club, but this she did not do immediately.

The public school teacher, consulted by the settlement social worker in the fall, described Mrs. Miller as one of those rare, "too-much-interested" parents in the school who came to school constantly to check up on her daughter's academic progress and upon her deportment. She seemed unwilling to accept Evelyn's own efforts and achievements, always comparing her school-work with that of her older sister. This same teacher had formerly had Mary as a pupil and remembered her as an outstanding student. This teacher reported that Evelyn seemed worried and tense, fearful of every little school test, lest she be obliged to confess at home that she had not excelled. She felt, too, that the girl was plainly embarrassed by her mother's constant appearances at school and also by her blatant air of superiority. She recalled that on one occasion, when Evelyn had been given a very poor mark in arithmetic, Mrs. Miller had hastened to school to insist that there must be some mistake, that it was simply impossible for a daughter of hers to have done so poorly! Intelligence tests revealed that Evelyn was of normal, average ability and should have no difficulty in keeping up with her grade.

Accepting Limitations

Little by little it was possible to help Mrs. Miller to see her problems more clearly and to face them more realistically. She was intelligent enough to understand intellectually, and gradually was also able to accept emotionally the fact that Mary was naturally a better student than Evelyn, by reason of the former's innate superior mental endowment; that it was unfair to expect Evelyn to skip classes in the same way that Mary could. She learned to understand, too, that whereas Mary seemed to be able to listen easily, and perhaps to enjoy, her long discourses on philosophical and ethical subjects, the same should not also be expected of Evelyn, especially at the age of eight and a half. The mother grew to realize that it was unwise to press Evelyn to achieve a school record such as Mary's, and to see also how this pressure must discourage Evelyn and make her lose interest in her school work. Her attention was called to Evelyn's special capacities: her interest in modeling, her enjoyment of good stories, her ability to take responsibilities and cooperate in group work —these were contributions which should be given recognition. As time went on, Mrs. Miller reported with delight that Evelyn was less irritable and "jumpy," more friendly, interested in her school work, and in general more cooperative about things. She was diligently trying to relieve Evelyn of the pressure of competing with her sister, and no longer checked on her day-to-day progress. The father was most enthusiastic about all these changes. Mrs. Miller said he understood Evelyn very well, and she confided that the girl was a good deal more like her lovable, more easy-going father than herself. Mrs. Miller found, too, that the feeling between the two children had improved a good deal, for she confessed that there had been many times when Evelyn and Mary were quarrelsome and irritable when together.

New Views and Outlets

Trying to help Mrs. Miller to see the assets as well as the liabilities of the new neighborhood was a more difficult problem. It was hard for her to stop luxuriating in dreams of the bygone days, and to refrain from continually talking about them. Nor could she very easily bring herself to see anything good in her present way of living or her meager surroundings. But gradually she began to find that there were many worth-while features in the neighborhood and in her home.

Mrs. Miller had so much energy and skill, she was so efficient in her home tasks, that she actually (like many more privileged home-makers) had too much time on her hands. Her social pride was tremendous. She had a real regard for culture and education; and her attitude of keeping herself, princess-fashion, away from the "common people" added glamor to her life. But the time did come when she was willing to consider joining a settlement

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Between Two Fires

By BESS B. LANE

MR. AND MRS. THOMPSON had been married twelve years when their first long-hoped-for child appeared upon a scene that had been up to this time rather placid and routinized. Mr. Thompson, a successful lawyer, had found life a little boring and a little lonely. His wife, with the help of one maid, kept the house in order, entertained friends occasionally, but had no intellectual or social interests and no absorbing hobbies. Each had for many years carefully and critically observed the offspring of their various friends and had developed very definite ideas as to how any child of theirs was to be trained.

The father proclaimed that there was to be no monkey-business about the bringing up of this child. "What the world needs today is hard men, men who can fight their way and even if downed can go on fighting. My boy must learn from the beginning that the world is a tough place, and that neither crying nor asking will get him anything, that he must forge ahead and take it. As far as his education is concerned, I want him to be well grounded in the three R's, and as he grows older to have much training in mathematics, Latin, and Greek for mental discipline. I shall permit no softness in my son's preparation for life." Mr. Thompson felt that he himself lacked certain qualities of concentration and efficiency which greatly limited his effectiveness, and which such a training would have supplied.

Mrs. Thompson, on the other hand, was thrilled by her new job of motherhood and hungry for the satisfactions it afforded. She determined that, since the world was so unfeeling, she, the mother, must as far as possible afford protection and smooth the way at all times. She must keep the child well at all costs, never relaxing her vigilance as to food, sleep, clothing, exercise, and sunshine. In her childhood she had not been well. This child must never suffer as she did. Mr. Thompson was all for good old-fashioned instantaneous obedience. His wife was for persuasion. He was for lights out, door closed, crying it out; and she was for a bit of comforting, including even rocking and singing. He felt that now and then a good brisk whipping was all to the good in this toughening process, while Mrs. Thompson shuddered at the thought of physical punishment. Strangely enough, even though each expressed these theories freely, it seemed never to occur to either during the boy's infancy that trouble for them and the child was inevitable.

When Peter was five years old, and went to a neighboring kindergarten, he was small and frail looking. A slight exertion such as a walk to a nearby park tired him. His voice was frequently nervous and high pitched. He seemed constantly insecure and worried and distressed about many things, ranging all the way from concern about dirtying his suit to what it is like to die and whether or not everyone has to die. His conversation was filled with fears. He could not sleep at night because, as he said, he slept with his mother who snored. He was afraid of being waked so he tried not to go to sleep.

The school brought these concerns of the child to the attention of the parents and both conscientiously renewed their efforts to help: the father by making an effort "to put more iron into him" by giving the boy such difficult tasks as going to the basement alone and shoveling some coal into the furnace, and telling him each night that only babies are afraid. Mrs. Thompson steadily tried to mitigate the harshness by increased attention to his health and happiness, accompanying all her acts with great manifestations of sympathy and love.

Beset by Fears

His fears continued to increase much to the distress of both home and school. Sometimes he seemed to get release and comfort by painting. One morning he painted what he said was a picture of a castle falling down. In one corner was a large gray mass which Peter said was a rock, and muttered to himself, "I'm under it." When one of the children in the group spoke about a ride in a car, Peter told about their new Packard, but said he did not like to ride in the car because it might go too near the edge of a cliff. One day Peter exhibited his sun-burnt arms and said he had been swimming, adding, "People drown when they swim." Another time, when making a paper house, he remarked to an observer, "But I got to have a floor in it. Poor people might live in it and then when they got their feet wet on the ground and took a cold, they wouldn't have money for a doctor."

One thing that concerned Peter greatly was his prospective trip to the hospital to have his tonsils removed. Unfortunately, while this worry was harassing him, an attempt was made to give him a mental test, but because of his preoccupation with his proposed operation, he did not respond. (Later it was found that he had a superior intelligence.) Another child asked him if he were going to X (a neighboring state) for his operation. Peter replied that most certainly he was not as there were no hospitals in that state as all the people there had been killed by storms. He added that Q (a nearby town) would be the next to go and that the way you could "tell that town when you saw it would be by dead people and torn down houses." He became angry when the children doubted this, and said he had seen the pictures in the paper and his mother had read about it.

Continual Conflict

Peter's intellectual capacity and curiosity seemed at times to be a liability rather than an asset. He became furious and almost inarticulate when he encountered something he could not master. Often a creative activity was undertaken with anxiety because he feared the new and unfamiliar. If there were two activities going on at the same time, he could not enjoy one because he was missing the other. When at school he worried for fear something might be happening to his mother, and when forced to stay at home he was greatly distressed because he might be missing something at school. Realistic stories about animals or children fed his anxiety. The only times he seemed wholly released from his fears in the school situation, were during the reading of stories of complete nonsense and unmistakable make-believe.

At the age of eight when problems were growing gradually more difficult for both child and parents, as well as for the school, the parents as a last resort sought help from a psychiatrist. This was done in a rather desultory manner, and continued for only a short time, for now each parent had become convinced that if only the other would cooperate the problem could quickly be solved. Some help was gained, some changes were made in the family demands, attitudes, and routine, but Peter, though somewhat better, continued to be frustrated and confused. He was full of initiative and ideas, but had a tendency to attempt much more than he could finish, and then the old worries returned. He needed much help in facing his experiences squarely and honestly, for he was still far too inclined when he got into a tight place to say, "I'll ask mother," or "I'll tell mother."

Peter is now eleven. He is stronger than formerly, but his fear of physical injury still pursues him. In spite of these worries, often, and usually at the wrong time, he makes abortive efforts to engage in physical combat with his classmates. The school feels that he is doing this in an effort to gain his father's respect. These puny attempts, together with his other emotional handicaps, make his social adjustment extremely difficult.

Academically, in spite of his excellent mind, he is making somewhat less than fair progress in every subject except science, which he enjoys and in which he excels. The school thinks it could use this interest to the very great advantage of the child by permitting him temporarily to become absorbed in collecting and classifying mosses, studying and identifying trees, and making an herbarium for the classroom. They think that through these activities he would gain something of an inner peace which he so sadly lacks, and would also acquire self-respect and the respect of his classmates.

What Price Arithmetic

Mr. Thompson cannot accept the advice of the school to permit Peter to drop arithmetic, his weakest and most hated subject, even temporarily, although the school knows from experience that often when children are allowed to take it easy in arithmetic, doing only a little incidental work, they can then come back to arithmetic after a rest of a year or so, and more than make up for the time lost. But the father cannot believe that "catering to the boy in this way and letting him do only what he pleases to do will, in the end, be to his advantage." He is unable to see that Peter emotionally and academically has become a pathological case and needs special and healing treatment. He cannot believe that the child's failure to succeed in arithmetic has anything to do with his emotional problems, and because he is convinced that more pressure and more drill will turn the trick he calls the boy from play each afternoon at 4:30 and gives him "a stiff work-out in the subject." As far as the school can determine, this has hindered rather than promoted the boy's progress.

The end of the year is approaching. Both father and mother show their interest and concern by coming to the school often and remaining a moment to

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Parents' Questions and Discussion

STUDY GROUP DEPARTMENT

Cécile Pilpel, Director—Anna W. M. Wolf, Editor

My boy of two is happy only when he can handle things in the house, such as lamps, chairs, ornaments, and articles in cupboards. He will not play with his toys. He has blocks, picture books, tricycle, rocking horse, and all sorts of mechanical toys, but they have no appeal for him. I have tried slapping his hand, saying "No, no, naughty." I have tried explaining what he may and may not play with. Sometimes I think he understands what is wrong, but it does not seem to affect his behavior and I hesitate to try severer measures. How can I break him of these habits?

Your main difficulty lies in the fact that you are expecting too much of a two-year-old. Many mothers make the mistake of believing that by training, conditioning, and demanding independence, etc., they can eliminate most of the trying behavior of young children. Two years old has well been called the runabout age, for at this time the very nature of a healthy child impels him to handle, to climb on, and to explore everything he sees. Since this is the case, constant maternal vigilance is unavoidable—not necessarily to prevent a child from doing these things, but to see that he does not damage either himself or valuable objects before he has the skill to navigate with impunity. You may wish, therefore, to put away certain things and rearrange your home a bit until that happy day arrives.

Children usually do not play with blocks much before the age of three, nor with mechanical toys until even later. Two-year-olds tire quickly of picture books. Perhaps suggestions for other more suitable toys might be helpful: a large ball, rag or woolly toys or animals, push and pull toys such as small wagons or cars, toy automobiles which can be pushed around on the floor or pulled by a string; a peg board, or an empty box with small blocks or large pebbles or other objects which he can take in and out; kitchen utensils also often make fine toys—a sauce pan, wooden spoons with which he can beat on the pans and make noise. A child of this age also needs a good deal of physical activity out-of-doors. The children's playgrounds in public parks today offer slides and swings which can be used by a two-year-old in case it is difficult to supply these things nearer home.

We have all been cautioned against overcoddling young children, with the result that the modern parent frequently goes to the other extreme of demanding behavior too mature for the young child's capacities. It is well to keep in mind that the technical ability to do something comes years before the capacity to *take the responsibility* for doing it, and the knowledge of what is wrong long before the ability to resist temptation. There is no set age when these capacities are fully ripe. Our task as parents is to help children to achieve them gradually and on a sound basis.

Mine is not a problem of asking "what to do," but rather of how to get myself into the frame of mind where I can do it. I think I honestly love my children (boys, two and four), but I find myself out of patience with them a dozen times a week, my sense of humor demolished, and all the common-sense which tells me that boys will be boys and that they are two nice healthy young animals, completely absent.

After college and before my marriage, I had active interests and ambitions, but I think I never believed that they could take the place of love and marriage. When these came my way I abandoned my old interests joyfully and went with my husband, to whom I am devoted, to a community which cut me off pretty completely from my old friends and activities. Now I wonder whether I overrated my womanly virtues and whether the rather "mental" existence which I led before marriage was the right sort of preparation for the functions of wife and mother. I have nearly arrived at the discouraging conclusion that my children are all right, but that their mother is all wrong. The ridiculous part is that despite all this I have an irrational desire for another *baby. What is wrong with this picture?*

Yours is evidently not a problem between you and your children, or even between you and your husband, but rather one between you and yourself. First will you be a little patient with your-

self and remember that women today are in something of a "spot"—a transition from old to new patterns of living—and don't pretend to believe that you should put the clock back, even if you could. What women have gained they must not abandon, but must assimilate and learn to combine with their traditional biological destinies.

There is no formula for not being irritated when Dickie empties your bureau drawers onto the floor, or when George, overcome with shyness, refuses to greet an elderly relative. But these things will somehow fall into their true proportions if you have gained for yourself some measure of inner peace and satisfaction, and you will then find yourself managing them quite unconsciously with a reasonable amount of both patience and skill. In other words, what can you do for yourself now which will bring you satisfactions as an adult human being? Everyone, whether a mother or not, needs work outlets for her special talents or capacities and activities which take her out of her immediate and personal concerns. In addition, you need social contacts which enliven, friendships which enrich, and scope for mental and spiritual growth. While much of this must be found alone, you will need also to feel that your husband shares some of the essentials of your experiences and that your relationship to him has vitality and depth. In other words, your problems are the problems of every woman. No one can tell you where to turn for a solution, but it can be said that where there is a will there is a way and the practical obstacles can be overcome. In the past you lived for self-improvement and self-development. You abandoned these things to embrace marriage and motherhood. I suspect that being what you are you cannot accept an "either—or," but must find ways of continuing both aspects, realizing the while that nothing can be satisfactory which jeopardizes your family life. This is no easy task, but relief from your irritability and from your present sense of frustration probably depends upon the degree of courage with which you face these realities and go forward.

I suppose I am just one of the many parents puzzled by the question of discipline and control. I have been eager to keep my children, now three and five, free from pressure, demands, and commands, which for me has meant leaving decisions as much as possible to them. I do not put much emphasis on manners, as some parents do. They both go to nursery school, but I have never insisted that they go every day, and often, one or the other stays at home. At meal-time they are never forced to eat; they are free to choose each morning what they will wear. When I go out with them, it is they, not I, who determine where. My husband has more old-fashioned ideas on these matters, so I have promised to submit the matter to you. Perhaps it is important to say that I am the sort of person who dislikes bossing as much as being bossed.

Yes, your last statement is illuminating. Your program of extreme self-determination for infants makes one wonder what there is in your own character which makes authority so repugnant to you that you are afraid to assume it even where the situation may call for it. Does this perhaps mean that what you are actually avoiding is responsibility? It is as though you were trying to keep your skirts clean in order to say to your children, when they are grown up, "You can't blame me. Everything you are is your own doing. Every choice you made was your own."

Giving choices has meaning only when the chooser has some grasp of the real consequences of the alternatives. Perhaps you are wise not to nag about eating or manners and in allowing them to stay home from school occasionally at this age. But I believe you should recognize that there are very many things about which you, not they, know best because you can look farther ahead. Are they to be allowed to stay home when they are nine and ten, or to choose which school they will go to? Will you remain imperturbed if they, as well as lacking manners, continue to be grossly inconsiderate of the feelings of others? Perhaps the fundamental objection to your attitude is your failure to realize that children are tacitly asking their parents to make many decisions for them and to stand for what is right. They often demand to be saved *from themselves*. The restraining hand, when a three-year-old reaches out to slap the baby, is better than punishment or the child's own feeling of guilt which follows. Going to school, even to good schools, is sometimes irksome, and becomes more difficult if the question is allowed to arise every morning whether to go or not to go. Constantly to burden children with choices when they cannot really grasp the outcome, is burdensome, confusing, and destructive to their feeling of security.

This does not mean reversion to the "mother knows best" attitude which never considers the child's real needs and wishes. But it does mean that sometimes mother knows better than the child himself can say, what the child really wishes. And it means, too,

that the child's degree of maturity must determine the kind of responsibilities which he should be expected to assume.

It seems reactionary to raise the question of who should be "boss" in the home where the children are concerned. Yet I find it difficult to enforce necessary routines because my husband frequently disagrees with my rulings: for instance, when it is bed-time for my eight-year-old and his father says he may be allowed "one more game" or he encourages indoor activities at a time when I want the children to be out-of-doors, and many similar instances. I feel that since I am responsible for seeing that the children get sufficient sleep, fresh air, time for home-work, and so on, I must be the one to make such decisions.

Your question raises several others: First, as to whether you and your husband *do* agree on the fundamentals of your program for the children, and second, as to whether you are, perhaps, letting your responsibilities overbalance your sense of values.

To mature people who believe in the democratic principle in human relationships, the idea of being boss is as repellent as the idea of being bossed. It should be possible to work out home management on a better basis than this. Your first step, of course, should be to discuss the whole question with your husband and try to arrive at a general basis of management with which he fully concurs. There are some matters—such as the amount of sleep requisite at certain ages—which are more or less fixed and not debatable; others are more open to question—such as the relative values of indoor and outdoor activities at certain times. Then, when you are sure you both want the same ends, be prepared to be a bit flexible in your ways of achieving these. At times, and within certain limits, "one more game" may be more important than fifteen minutes of sleep, or the chance to work or play with their father may be much more valuable than that particular hour's "fresh air."

All this presupposes, of course, that you are both honest in your concern about the children, and that whatever need each of you may have to dominate is being recognized and adequately met in other ways.

How can a mother with conservative ideas deal with the modern and precocious ideas young girls have nowadays? For instance, a thirteen-year-old girl desires to have a permanent wave, red finger nails, silk stockings, and to be allowed to go frequently to the movies. All this is contrary to my beliefs, which would keep children of that age children, *simple and natural, not so wildly desirous of aping elders. Yet the plea is, "All the girls in my class do that," or "have that." I want to be progressive and keep up with my youngsters, but is my better judgment always to be pitted against "what all the rest do"?*

You will probably have to reconcile yourself to some sort of compromise, for it is nearly impossible to hold a child to ways, even "better" ways, if they run altogether counter to the group with whom she is associating. Her statement that "all the rest do" bears investigation, however. It is probably an exaggeration. There is no intrinsic harm in nail polish, and you might try letting your daughter have her way in the matter for a time. I suspect she will soon weary of it or be laughed out of it by the others. I know one girl of nine whose mother has administered nail varnish from time to time in the hope of discouraging nail biting. Result—the child refuses to have it as "all the boys in school laugh at me." Curlers might be a compromise with the desire for a "permanent" or the kind of finger waves given by smart children's barber shops. "Dress-up" at home, where the child can run riot with rouge, lipstick, long silk stockings (your cast-offs), jewelry, etc., may satisfy her appetite a bit too. I should be careful to avoid the shocked look and the pained expression. Enter a bit into the spirit of her enterprise and give her some help and counsel for making up with taste and discrimination. All this up to a certain point, of course, and after that, some good wholesome "kidding."

The movies is a more serious question, and volumes could be written on the subject. In general, you may find a solution in letting her go to certain selected movies once or twice a month with other children or with her parents. There are many good pictures, the names of which are available in prepared lists. On these occasions, not only give your permission but enter into her excitement with some real zest and discuss with her the good and bad points of the picture.

In addition, of course, try actively to encourage all sorts of wholesome out-of-door and indoor games, sports, and projects for her and for her friends. A discussion of your problem with the mothers of some of the other girls may result in the discovery that they are very ready to cooperate with your plans.

Readers' Slants

We herewith present some contributions of our readers who have been thinking about child training and learning through both study and experience. We, the editors, may disagree with what is said as frequently as we approve it. But in either case, we feel that the writers have a point of view which may prove stimulating to our readers. Anyone with something to say which may interest parents or teachers is cordially invited to send a contribution. In addition, we would welcome your comments on whatever appears in this column.

Calico

by KARNA YNGVE

"CALICO," the geography teacher was saying, "is the cheapest of all goods. It is worn almost entirely by Negroes and poor whites in the South." The geography teacher often talked about interesting things that weren't just about maps and principal industries. The Little Girl liked to hear her, but today she held her head down and didn't look at the teacher or at her classmates. Suppose someone guessed her dress was made of calico—that would be awful!

She had always worn calico, but she didn't know it was the cheapest goods. She had never had a "bought" dress. Mother always selected the material herself and made all the dresses after the same pattern—a gathered skirt and a plain blouse attached to it. The Little Girl didn't like any of the material Mother selected—it was always the same, black and white figures so it wouldn't show the dirt. How longingly she looked at the other little girls' dresses! Some had lace and other trimming on them and some had pleated skirts. She wished she could have a pleated skirt just once. Mother had worked in a dress shop once where people had beautiful silk and satin and velvet dresses made. The Little Girl wondered if Mother could have made beautiful dresses if she had silk to use or maybe it was just that Mother didn't know how to sew for little girls.

The teacher went on to tell about other material and how much it cost and then said: "Now I'll tell you about the materials in this room." Immediately many hands were raised. "What is my dress made of, Teacher?" The teacher felt the goods. There were silk dresses, gingham, challis; there was serge, broadcloth, and alpaca. It was an interesting game for the other children and no calico was mentioned. The Little Girl did not look up so the teacher passed her by. But the boy across the aisle, thinking she was being neglected and was too shy to ask, said, "Teacher, what's hers?" If she could only have died or fainted just then before the teacher felt her dress!

Maybe the teacher would call it by some other name or maybe she would say she didn't know. She looked at her pleadingly, but teacher did not understand.

"Calico!"

Every day after that when she went into the room for her geography lesson she wondered if the children called her "The Calico Girl." They were all nice to her, but she wondered what they said among themselves.

One day Mother brought home a dress from the Big House where she worked. It was many years old because the little girl who had worn it was now a very big girl. It had big funny sleeves but when the Little Girl felt the softness of the dress she knew she would like it. Of course it was different from the dresses of the other little girls in school, but so were the dresses Mother made; this wasn't so very much different.

She sang a little song over and over as she got ready for school the next morning. The dress fitted her—not so bad. It was a beautiful dark blue and soft; she loved to hold her hand on it.

When she came into the schoolroom the teacher began to laugh. The Little Girl could not understand why the teacher should laugh at her, but she looked right at her and there was no one else near. Then the teacher wrote something on a piece of paper, folded it, and said to her, "Take this note to Miss Stanley." It was the first time the teacher had sent her on an errand. There was something queer about that note. It wouldn't be right to read it; that would be a terrible thing to do, but somehow she felt the note was about her. Maybe it wouldn't be dishonest just to see if it was. She wouldn't read the note if it wasn't. "I just wanted you to see this *dress!*" The exclamation point was made much bigger than the ones in books and there were two lines under the word dress. The Little Girl thought at first she wouldn't take it to the teacher but then she thought if she did not, her teacher would talk at noon to her friend, Miss Stanley, and find out. It would do no

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Science Contributes

CHILD POSTURE

By MILTON I. LEVINE, M.D.

ANY person following a large group of children and studying them from a physical as well as an emotional point of view is certain to come to definite conclusions regarding the inter-relationship of these two factors. In the study of posture sufficient evidence has been obtained to show that improvement in posture and muscle tone is associated with an increase in alertness and a sense of well being. Professor William James, the psychologist, wrote in 1899 that he was convinced "that erect posture keeps up the spirits and tends to banish fear, despondency, and depressing thoughts; that bodily postures definitely influence the emotions."

The converse is also true. There is no question but that in a great many cases the posture of an individual is dependent largely upon his emotional state. A child who is happy, alert, and interested usually reflects it in his good muscle tone and fine body carriage. On the other hand, the disinterested, dissatisfied child, or one emotionally upset usually exhibits a poor posture and develops a poor degree of muscle tone.

Failure to recognize this relationship has undoubtedly led to a great deal of unnecessary and even detrimental procedure with many children and adults as well. Only too often is the droop-shouldered child forced to wear braces, to take formalized exercises, or, worse still, to undergo constant criticism and nagging, when a little study and correction of unfortunate environmental factors would produce quicker and far greater therapeutic results.

We have frequently had the opportunity to watch children gradually adjusting themselves after having been unhappy in their home or school environment. There were children whose parents were overanxious and whose overanxiety was reflected in their children; children who for the time being felt themselves unwanted by their classmates; some who felt themselves unable to cope with their companions in the natural competition of daily life. A defeated child, or for that matter any defeated individual regardless of age, will rarely carry himself erect. But, let the same individual experience the thrill of accomplishment and the satisfaction of being looked up to by his fellowmen—and an almost incredible improvement occurs in posture and carriage.

What is the most correct method of judging posture? Unfortunately, all standards are based upon the figure of the child standing still and erect. This method is grossly inaccurate, for one sees numerous children who have poor postures in standing, especially when lacking in interest—but who, in motion in some game or activity that they enjoy, become beautifully coordinated and assume excellent postures. A motion picture study of children enjoying rhythms or some game will bring this point out clearly, especially when compared with stills taken of the same children attempting to "stand up straight."

It is not to be inferred, from what has been said, that all cases of poor posture are based upon emotional difficulties. Poor posture is not infrequently due to fatigue, and then, of course, one occasionally finds children suffering from congenital physical anomalies such as variations in the number and shape of the vertebrae and ribs, inequality in length of limbs, dislocation of hips, lack of development of certain bones in the extremities, etc.; and there are a certain number of poor postures which are the end result of disease processes, such as rickets, poliomyelitis, and tuberculosis.

Muscular fatigue as the cause of poor posture may be due to a number of factors. A child may not get sufficient rest to compensate for his degree of activity. He may go to sleep too late, or arise too early. He may be straining to keep up with children physically more capable. Under any of these circumstances, the muscles fatigue, and we find the typical picture of drooping shoulders, prominent abdomen, and occasionally low arches. Lack of sufficient physical exercise will often bring about a weakening of the muscles with a similar resultant posture. Muscular weakness is also often found as the result of a general run down condition associated with certain toxic diseases (such as the infectious diseases, sinusitis, pneumonia), and any condition which forces the child to remain in bed for long periods of time.

What is good posture? Throwing the shoulders back and the chest up, drawing the abdomen in, and pulling in the chin is the common idea of good posture. It is a superficial picture, however. Really good posture implies a naturally relaxed and well coordinated body with a proper balance of all muscles, and

is best observed when the child is unconscious of the purpose of the observation, and especially while making active use of these muscles.

One should also remember that there are various types of body build among children, and that excellence of posture in these various types is not to be measured by any single standard. The slender, long-boned, usually high-strung child has much greater difficulty coordinating and developing a good posture than the broad-muscled, stocky, placid child.

And in this respect it is frequently forgotten that heredity plays a most important part in body build, a factor neglected in the usual standards for weight and height. If one examines both parents of a child he will often find the same postural defects that the child exhibits, especially when they are related to a particular type of body build. Bowing of legs, incurving of the back, protrusion of the abdomen, and flatness of the feet may be among such defects.

Before discussing treatment, it should be pointed out that many temporary postural defects accompany physical development and clear up normally as long as a child gets sufficient activity for stimulation, and sufficient rest for compensation. Practically all children of two years of age or younger have flat feet. These disappear with continued use of the feet and with the development of increased muscle tone. Bow legs of early childhood, even those resulting from rickets, will usually straighten out as the child grows older if proper food is given and hygienic measures followed. The protruding abdomen, typical of the so-called infantile posture, almost always disappears with improvement in general muscle tone.

In planning the treatment of any child with a postural defect it is essential that the cause of the defect be understood. Is it due to a structural defect, a congenital anomaly, or the end result of some disease; is it due to some habit, such as constantly carrying things in one hand, or sitting on one foot; or is it due to poor muscle tone?

If it happens to be the latter, a study should be made of the child's environment and habits, and every attempt made to obtain optimal conditions—always bearing in mind that the unhappy child and the fatigued child is more than likely to reflect these conditions in his carriage.

In cases where children need extra rest it is far preferable, from an emotional standpoint, that this be obtained at home after school—so as not to make the child appear physically inferior before his schoolmates. Children of overanxious parents suffer greatly from this embarrassment, especially when they are kept out of physical activities at too frequent intervals. They will at times compensate in intellectual ways, believing that they will never be able to reach the physical attainments of the other children.

If exercises are necessary to correct a postural defect it is desirable that they be given in an informal way such as through games and rhythmic exercises. For instance, to develop the muscle tone of the upper extremities baseball batting, ball throwing, chopping trees, and swinging a sledge hammer are enjoyable and desirable aids in treatment. Well-regulated rhythmic exercises not only can improve coordination but if properly given can build up the muscle tone in almost every part of the body.

In the correction of specific defects much more can be accomplished if a prescribed exercise is presented in an interesting manner. For example, for flat feet the picking up of colored marbles with the toes is greatly enjoyed by all children; for curvature of the spine, a chinning bar hung in the doorway will prove a valuable aid; for knock-knees bicycle riding should be encouraged, whereas roller-skating should be discouraged. For general muscle and body development, swimming is unsurpassed as an ideal combination of exercise and enjoyment. For bodily poise, grace, and coordination folk dancing is ideally adapted.

In 1923 and 1924 a study was made of 1,708 elementary school children in Chelsea, Massachusetts, under the auspices of the United States Department of Labor. Of these children 961 were given postural training and 747 received the ordinary gymnastic exercises. The two groups were similar at the outset in respect to age, sex, nationality, and posture grade.

Among the valuable findings recorded were the facts that improvement in body mechanics was also associated with improvement in school work; that the rate of absence due to personal illness decreased in children who received posture training until it was considerably lower than that of untrained children; and that the improvement in deportment and scholarship was greater among the trained children than among the untrained.

It is evident, therefore, that the posture of a child and his emotional state are closely related. In a great many cases an unhappy emotional condition is the etiological factor behind a poor posture, while in many other cases poor posture due to muscular fatigue or some organic defect causes a poor emotional state.

It is our duty, therefore, to study a child from all aspects, physical as well as environmental, and, if it is necessary to treat the child, to do so in as enjoyable and unobtrusive a manner as is possible.

SHOP TALK

IN THE New York shop of Mariska Karasz, at 20 East 56th Street, is a collection of children's clothes which seems to me without reservation to be the most beautiful I have ever seen. These clothes are done from the practical point of view of one who is herself the mother of two little girls, plus a strong sense of color contrasts, plus the inspiration of designs from her native Hungary. This last note is not too insistent, however, being used only when thoroughly adapted to our own American clothes; and some of the most attractive of the designs are taken from motifs on early American quilts.

The most distinctive features of Mariska Karasz' clothes for girls are the lovely and original combinations which she employs—such as bright blue, white and red for everyday dresses, pale blue banded in deep coral for party clothes—and her striking use of appliqué and imaginative designs. With this goes the utmost in practicality: the use of only thoroughly washable materials, even in woolens (Viyella flannel), buttons which are easy for small fingers to handle, comfortable raglan sleeves, ample allowance for growth, zippers which come apart for easy washing, etc. These clothes are all completely hand stitched, and custom made to the measure of the individual child and are therefore in the luxury class, the dresses starting at about $10.

Some of the more interesting items noted here:

Sailcloth mittens, which are water repellent and light weight, to be worn over woolen ones.

Attractive corduroy skirts with broad knit straps in three shades of blue, and full-length zippers which open up for laundering.

Charming "mother-and-daughter" sets of beach coats in gay flower sprigged cottons; and summer dresses using buttons as flower motifs.

Really beautiful bibs (with large self-help buttons) and aprons with appliqué designs. Even children beginning to resent bibs, love these bibs and aprons.

"Supper Pyjamas" (Mrs. Karasz' pet invention) in gingham or Viyella flannel, which are designed to wear over the regular pyjamas instead of bathrobes, much better for crawling around the floor.

Mariska Karasz has exhibited her original clothes at the Lincoln School in New York and in several other cities including Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington. If proper credentials are submitted she will send out some of her models to interested people who cannot visit her shop. P. R. F.

Children's Books

Aucassin and Nicolette. Illus. by Maxwell Simpson. Holiday House. 1936. 107 pp. $3.00.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. By Mark Twain. Heritage Press. 1936. 384 pp. $3.75.

The Maltese Cat. By Rudyard Kipling. Doubleday, Doran & Co. 92 pp. $2.00.

A little reprint with fair binding, silver-spangled box, and exquisite illustrations by Maxwell Simpson conveys all the enchantment of the well-loved romance from medieval France—*Aucassin and Nicolette*. This glamorous legend, translated by Andrew Lang, should delight our daughters of high school age and prove a treasured collector's item as well.

Another gift edition is the new *Tom Sawyer* with special illustrations by Norman Rockwell. The fine printing and delightful pictures make this a volume of real distinction. One must hope, however, that the youthfulness of the pictures will not tempt the eager parent to introduce Tom prematurely. He is most appreciated when the reader is on the far side of eleven.

It is good to know that Kipling's *Maltese Cat* has been published separately for young people. This stirring story of polo in India has been hidden away all these years in *The Day's Work*, a volume which includes other tales not intended for an age for which this horse story par excellence is so well suited. Now, in a volume of its own, it will thrill many a young heart as it has thrilled many an older one. The book, beautifully illustrated in color and in black-and-white by the beloved artist, Lionel Edwards, is a delightful luxury for the young reader.

MRS. HUGH GRANT STRAUS

The Story Book of Foods from the Field. By Maud and Miska Petersham. John C. Winston Co. 1936. 130 pp. $2.50.

Ancient Egypt, early England, old China, Russia, Palestine, India, and America from Indian days to our own times, come to life in the superb illustrations and clear simple text of the Petershams' latest book.

Wheat, corn, rice, and sugar are its subjects, the part they played in the development of the races of the world, in the colorful panorama of daily life in each land and time, as it revolved about the planting

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Book Reviews

What It Means to Grow Up. By Fritz Kunkel, M.D. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. 180 pp.

There is a discernible trend in the newest theories of child training which should be reassuring to those of an earlier generation. This trend is evidenced in the emphasis on that old catch-all "character." But whereas its meaning had once been self-evident, and it then fell into the discard as having too many possibly contradictory meanings, now we are beginning to see that it is a real term, but one which needs analysis and re-definition. We can no longer hold, for instance, that ambition is in itself a good quality, for ambition may be an expression of insecurity, of an early frustration, of ruthless self-seeking; we cannot say either that ambition is a bad trait, for we know that it is frequently of the stuff of which heroes are made. All we can say is that it is a good quality if the man be of good character. We have solved no problem but merely posed one: what do we mean by character and how is it to be nurtured in our children?

In this little book, Dr. Kunkel makes a very satisfactory effort to answer these questions. As he sees it, behavior patterns fall into one of two categories: those predominantly egocentric and those predominantly outgoing, which he calls "objective." He shows briefly how the egocentric pattern is basically sterile, while the objective attitude is inherently fruitful. He discusses the likelihood of an egocentric outlook becoming fixed in children who are pampered and in children who are prematurely hardened; in those who are docile as well as in those who are obviously rebellious; in those who are eagerly gregarious, no less than in those who need no companions. Real maturity, on the other hand, is the achievement of an objective attitude, and the progress toward it can be measured by the growth in what he calls "tension capacity." This is the ability to lengthen when necessary the interval between desire and satisfaction, the willingness to perform present unattractive tasks for the sake of future good. It will be recognized that this apparently simple gauge is capable of very wide application. For instance, a little child emotionally and physically immature wants something, and grabs it. There is no tension capacity. His pattern is completely egocentric. He is, in short, a child. But in our prisons and often out of them, are thousands of men and women, physically mature, who likewise saw something they wanted and, taking as short a cut as possible, with no consideration of the rules by which the rest of society functions, grabbed it, too. Too little tension capacity, here, and again, a primarily egocentric pattern of behavior.

In his chapter on "Love and Responsibility" Dr. Kunkel presents particularly well these factors of objectivity and tension capacity as the roots of maturity and of real character. He shows how the fullest satisfaction of an emotionally mature love can be realized only by those who are free of themselves, not closed in, in an egocentric universe. The Biblical paradox "Whoso loses his life shall find it," is made psychologically clear.

The book as a whole is rather easier reading than this comment on it. It is, perhaps, a little unfortunate that the author set out to write a "popular" book, for he suggests, in his main themes, ideas of great significance, worthy of a great deal of thought. He has, however, oversimplified his subject to some extent, and frequently gives far from cogent examples of the various types of behavior. His discussion of how undesirable attitudes can be changed is, again, possibly a little too simple. The structure of his basic theory is, however, beautifully clear. Its lucidity and timeliness should appeal to every thoughtful parent and teacher.

HELEN STEERS BURGESS

So You're Going to a Psychiatrist. By Elizabeth I. Adamson, M.D. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., N. Y. 1936. 263 pp.

Despite its unfortunate title and occasional similar lapses into pure journalese, Dr. Adamson's book is a valuable one. She has written a popular psychiatry which is both sound and eminently readable. Although sometimes just a little too "clever," it is for the most part dignified and carefully thought out, and entirely free from the sensationalism which so often mars attempts to popularize material of this type.

The first chapter is perhaps a mistake. It describes and briefly discusses a number of cases of maladjusted people such as one meets in every community. These cases might have been discussed in the body of the book with some thoroughness and meaning. Used

(*Continued on page 158*)

News and Notes

Conference on the Young Child

The assembly rooms of the Child Study Association were crowded to capacity on January 18 by an audience of some three hundred parents, educators, community workers, and other public spirited citizens gathered for a meeting on The Young Child—His Needs Today. This meeting, sponsored by the Child Study Association of America, is the second of a series of three jointly planned by a group of cooperating organizations who are rallying the forces interested in the education of the young child. The first meeting was held by the New York Kindergarten Association, and a third will be called by the United Parents' Association.

The program, under the chairmanship of Professor Harvey W. Zorbaugh of New York University, and Mrs. Howard S. Gans, Honorary President of the Child Study Association, included addresses by Professor William H. Kilpatrick of Teachers College, Columbia University, and Miss Alice V. Keliher, Chairman of the Committee on Human Relations of the Progressive Education Association, and somewhat briefer remarks by Stephen F. Bayne, Associate Superintendent of Schools, representing the New York City Board of Education. In the absence of Professor Patty Smith Hill, of Teachers College, who was prevented by illness from appearing as planned for the Conference Committee on the Needs of the Young Child, Mrs. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, director of the Child Study Association, spoke briefly, presenting a report which had been prepared by Miss Jennie Hoxton of the New York Kindergarten Association, on the Conference Committee's organization and objectives. Mrs. William C. Dickerman, chairman of the Conference Committee and president of the New York Kindergarten Association, was called upon for a few extemporaneous comments, as was also Miss Margaret Holmes, director of the New York City Board of Education kindergartens, and an active member of the Conference Committee.

This Conference Committee now includes some twenty interested organizations. It is the outgrowth of a smaller meeting, called by Mrs. Dickerman last May, at which some half dozen leaders in the field assembled to discuss the growing public interest in preschool education.

As a first step in its program, the Conference Committee has undertaken to attempt to secure state aid for kindergartens, which are an accepted part of the school program in this state, but still entirely dependent on local support. The Conference Committee urges upon all New Yorkers interested in the welfare of young children an active support of the Feld Bill (introductory number 87) designed to meet this problem.

Educational Progress in 1936

"Our nation has definitely stepped forward educationally in 1936," according to John W. Studebaker, U. S. Commissioner of Education. His report on the state of education throughout the nation is distinctly optimistic in tone. Fewer states have been in need of federal funds to keep their schools in operation during the past year; school plants throughout the nation have been improved with the assistance of the Public Works Administration; teachers' salaries and expenditures for operation and maintenance of school plants have increased in both rural and urban communities; and special services which were curtailed or eliminated during the early years of the depression are gradually being restored. There has been widespread recognition of the value of nursery schools and of adult education and a significant growth of interest on the part of educators and community leaders in the problems of "out-of-school youth."

New Nursery Toys

The modern parent of a nursery-school-age child will be interested in the opening of a display of educational equipment at The Harriet Johnson Nursery School, 69 Bank Street. The toys and equipment have been carefully selected, and, in most cases, designed by members of the school faculty and built under the supervision of Miss Jessie Stanton, director of the school.

Of greatest interest to parents are the large out-of-door building blocks which children find indispensable in school and yet which cannot be bought at regular toy shops. Other large equipment on display includes nursery furniture, chests of drawers for toys, horizontal ladders, slides, and the wooden kegs which children two, three, four, and five years old like so well for building and rolling around on. There are many other smaller toys of unique design—dolls, wooden doll carriages, small blocks cut in unit sizes, interlocking wooden cars and engines.

In the Magazines

Has Efficiency a Place in Child Training? By Jean Schick Grossman. The National Parent-Teacher Magazine, December, 1936.

Mrs. Grossman stresses the great need for flexibility and frequent adjustments on the part of parents in establishing children's routines. Efficiency in the guidance of children is but a tool and not a goal in itself. The article is rich with examples of the use and misuse of efficiency in the home.

Children Need Friends. By Frances Strain. Parents Magazine, January, 1937.

Children need other children for many reasons: as friends and adversaries, both equally beloved; to guard against shyness, to provide contact with people of differing backgrounds which lays the foundation for a far-reaching democracy. Leave children by themselves to make friends and let them be indiscriminate as to the sex of their playmates if you wish to give your girls an enviable physical and social equipment.

I Was a Teacher in That School. By Motier Fisher. Parent-Teacher Magazine, December, 1936.

Sometimes it takes a shock to bring a traditional evil to the fore so that something will be done about it. The author delivers a shock on the subject of marking and report cards which may well upset parents and teachers and increase the demand for more humane and constructive methods of evaluating students. The case which provides the theme for this article is unusual—not because it is different in kind, but merely in intensity.

When Children Ask About God. By Edna Dean Baker. Childhood Education, December, 1936.

Children's questions about God are difficult to answer. But there are serious dangers: irritation, confusion, fear, loss of confidence and security when such questions are evaded. Adults, and more particularly parents, are urged to answer such questions as best they can in the light of their own understanding and beliefs.

Suggestions for Study: Parental Attitudes

TOPICAL OUTLINE

1. The Young Parent

   The earliest problems: Is the young mother an amateur? How can she learn? The all-knowing mother, mother-in-law, nurse; the desire to be modern; anxiety versus enjoyment; finding oneself as wife and as mother.

2. The Growing Family

   Differing environments for children in the same family; special parental attitudes toward oldest, youngest, and middle children; the father's rôle in his children's development.

3. Children as Wish-Fulfilment

   Our ideal child and our real children—how may they be reconciled? Parental attempts to force children to be other than they are. "Over-protected" children and "rejected" children as the result of parental conflicts. Parents who "live for their children"; parents who believe they can "leave their children free." Fallacies of both extremes.

4. When Children Go to School

   Parents and Teachers: Sources of friction between parents and teachers. How may these be overcome? Advantage to children of friendly relations between home and school; discrepancies between home and school attitudes toward discipline, etc. Helping children to have wholesome attitudes toward school successes and failures.

   Home factors in school adjustments: Danger of parental standards too high or too low. Expecting children to measure up to standards of other members of family.

5. Parents as People

   Effects on children of parents' discontent with their own lives as adults. Marital harmony or disharmony. The parents' place in the community—how are the children affected? Self-development for parents—how may it come about? Community opportunities for work and education.

PROBLEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. John is twelve, an only boy in a home where both mother and grandmother are wrapped up in him. His father is away a great deal on business and when he comes home may play with the boy but has no active voice in his guidance or in plans for his future. What may be the effect of this feminine atmosphere upon John? What could be done about it?

2. In a home whose members have always excelled in their studies, Mary, aged fifteen, is no exception. She works hard to be at the head of her class and rarely brings home less than an A which brings great praise from her parents. What else do we need to know about Mary, in order to gauge whether her development is as sound and satisfying as her parents feel it to be?

TOO GOOD

(*Continued from page 137*)

errors. After David was out of the room, she expressed surprise at this attempt to keep him in a perpetual conviction of sin, and he retorted somewhat defensively that it was better than losing one's temper and spanking him as she had done. To this Mrs. Kuhn heartily disagreed, expressing the belief that nothing was as bad as long-drawn-out moral bullying, and eventually won the day. Moreover, a long talk between husband and wife about the atmosphere of Mrs. Kuhn's parental home led to considerable clarification of what they wanted to achieve in their own.

Other incidents have followed in which Mrs. Kuhn has stood her ground. A stranger on the beach near their home asked David to mind the baby for her while she did an errand. He declined in the direct manner of childhood whereat she turned to his mother, saying that he was the rudest child she had ever seen. The remark failed to perturb her—she felt "nothing but satisfaction" when she saw him dive into the water with a group of boys his own age. She admits, too, that many friends have commented favorably on the change in David, saying, "He is so much more a real boy—not that he was ever really a sissy"—they have added in a tone which makes her realize that he had come perilously near it.

Yet there is still that within her which resents the loss of that gentler, more feminine character which he is outgrowing. His increasing outspokenness is bound to be a shock to one whose whole life has been devoted to an attempt to conceal or spiritualize the more unvarnished passions which her son is now learning to express.

THE TWIG RESISTS

(*Continued from page 143*)

mothers' club, and she found herself actually enjoying this new experience. At first she was rather unpopular, particularly since she insisted on declaiming long poems of her own composition to her bewildered and bored club mates. But gradually she made a place for herself and achieved recognition. She sang well, and she had some unusual foreign costumes, which added color to these occasions. She was also a fine actress, and the group quickly recognized this talent. Being the leading lady in one of the club plays meant so much to her that she glowed with a new-found feeling of kinship with the other group members. She made a few special friends, though none very intimate, and frequently invited them for tea at her home. The day dawned when Mrs. Miller's philosophic statements included remarks to the effect that there *was* after all much good to be found everywhere, and that "you can do a lot to improve your surroundings and your life, if you put your mind to it." In the child study group meetings which Mrs. Miller attended faithfully, the topics discussed made it possible for her to become acquainted with many general aspects of family relationships, as well as specific day-to-day suggestions for getting along with the children. For example, when the members were discussing the question "Should we tell children our money troubles?" Mrs. Miller spoke of her detailed discussions with her children about the exact status of the family income; and she mentioned, among other things, that her youngest child was inclined to worry a good deal about family problems. Discussion of just how much a young child might be told and when, of the fears and insecurities which might result from too early awareness, of how children differ in their ability to absorb such facts, and other phases of this topic helped her to clarify her own problem in a more objective way. She became aware that many of the mothers in the group were obliged to accept aid from public and private agencies, but that they were nevertheless retaining their self-respect and were eager to help their children to "take it with their heads up." For her it had been an ordeal to know that her husband went to a free clinic; but she learned to understand more clearly the mutual obligations between society and its members.

As for Evelyn, it was interesting to see how much she continued to improve. She finally did join a settlement club and succeeded in enjoying herself in the group. She too began to make some friends whom her mother made welcome whenever they came to her home. She had a birthday party at the settlement club, and Mrs. Miller took pride in providing the refreshments and arranging a suitable program with the help of the club leader.

How much of Mrs. Miller's talk of the glory of the past had been wishful thinking, one could not know. The important thing was that she ceased to look back so much and tried to face, accept, and understand the "here and now," and to evaluate her children and her neighbors in a new way. When Evelyn returned to play school the following summer, her new teacher described her as a well-adjusted, busy, and happy member of her group—which is as far as the story goes.

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"Safe for children," the advertisements say; but medical authorities, as reported in the December issue of CONSUMERS UNION REPORTS, show that mineral oil drops can cause fatal pneumonia. Do you know which inhalants, ointments, gargles, and internal medicines "for colds" will do good? Which simply waste your money? Which can cause serious harm? Read the full particulars —GIVING BRAND NAMES—in the January issue of CONSUMERS UNION REPORTS.

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SOME OTHER CONSUMERS UNION REPORTS

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CHILDREN'S SHOES, UNION SUITS AND SLEEPING GARMENTS

A report on children's shoes in a recent issue tells which brands wear best and gives medical experts' advice on fitting the child's feet; how much to allow for growth, etc. Twelve brands, including Thom McAn, Edwards, Pediforme, and Endicott Johnson, are rated—two of them as "Best Buys." In the current issue there is an examination of 12 brands of cotton underwear, and the opinion of child specialists on cotton versus wool for undergarments. Leading brands of children's sleeping garments are also rated in this issue.

1937 RADIOS

"Tone quality only fair. . . . Hum level high. . . . Dial calibration spotty. . . . Tuning eye insensitive and useless. . . . Obviously this receiver had never been adequately inspected. . . ." This excerpt—from the report on 1937 radios in a recent issue—refers to one of the ten models listed as "Not Acceptable." Over 30 models (including Philco, Emerson, RCA, Midwest, etc.) are rated—many as "Best Buys" or "Also Acceptable."

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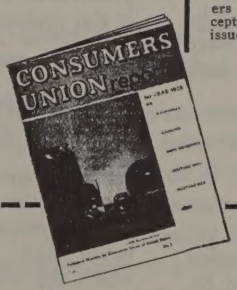
Do you want to know which vacuum cleaners will do the best job of cleaning? How rebuilt models compare with new ones in all-round value? How the different makes compare in construction and electrical insulation? Tested by unbiased engineers for cleaning ability, electric shock hazard, general engineering, construction and other factors, 15 of the newest models of vacuum cleaners are rated by Consumers Union Reports as "Best Buys," "Also Acceptable," or "Not Acceptable." In this same issue 14 brands of electric irons are compared and rated.

Discussed also in the Current Reports are MAPLE SYRUPS, SHAVING CREAMS, SOAPS AND LOTIONS, MEN'S SUITS and MEN'S SOCKS. In recent issues the reports on tests of refrigerators, gasolines, motor oils, toilet soaps, men's shirts, gins, brandies, and cordials, fountain pens, shoes, oil burners, dentifrices and many other products of vital importance, have been published. *In an early issue there will be a complete report on the 1937 AUTOMOBILES.*



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- ☐ **JANUARY**—Men's Suits, Cold Remedies, Shaving Creams, Children's Undergarments.

CONSUMERS UNION of U. S.

BOOK REVIEWS

(*Continued from page 153*)

as a sort of appetizer, they are necessarily superficially treated and belie the real tone of the book.

One might also wish that Dr. Adamson had been a little more sanguine in predicting the results of correct procedures, in her otherwise excellent chapter on "Letting the Child Grow Up." The advice is good but it all sounds a little too easy, despite the warning that emotionally healthy parents are of primary importance and procedures only secondary.

But these defects are comparatively slight and by no means overshadow the good points of the book. For Dr. Adamson shows unusual ability in translating rather forbidding concepts into understandable and generally acceptable form. Her chapter on the normal psychosexual development of a child, for example, is a uniquely successful popularization of this difficult material under the disarming title, "The Baby's Five Year Program." It is perfectly sound analytic psychology—and it will be accepted by many who are puzzled or offended by the more technical analytic vocabulary. Almost equally successful is the following chapter, "Design for Immaturity," an account of the forces which may operate to upset this normal psychosexual development. Other excellent chapters are: "Politics of the Mind"—a popular explanation of the Ego, Id, Super-Ego relationships; "Running from Ghosts," which explores the mechanisms of neurotic behavior—and "In the Psychiatrist's Office," wherein Dr. Adamson explains the psychiatrist's task and something of his methods.

Primarily the book is important because it will be read, and read by many people who would shy away from more academic presentations of the same material.

HELEN G. STERNAU

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

(*Continued from page 152*)

and harvesting of the food which was its peculiar staple; the legends that grew about them, and became part of the fixed belief of each people; the development from crude and primitive tools to the marvels of modern production; and finally, most thrilling of all, the harnessing of the resources of the world to bring to us our everyday foods.

The print is large and clear, and the whole colorful volume is one which a child will use and treasure.

NORA KRAMER

BETWEEN TWO FIRES

(*Continued from page 145*)

talk to the teacher. When the father appears, his questions are usually three: "Can my boy hold his own in a good fight? What is his rank in his class?" and, "How is he getting along in arithmetic?" Mrs. Thompson shows her concerns and values by asking questions about draughts, temperature of room, quality of lunches, dangers of football, and crossing streets alone.

The story is unfinished as Peter is not yet twelve. One can point no moral, since by no means have all the factors in the situation been explored. The very sincerity and integrity of his parents and their eagerness to improve upon the handiwork of *their* parents have made them peculiarly unable to relax their oppressive attitudes. Whatever else may be involved, what other needs each may be expressing through these uncompromising attitudes, we can only guess! Neither can one predict the outcome as we still know so little about the chances of success or failure in such situations. But we do feel that much suffering on the part of all could have been prevented and might in the future be avoided if we could in some way make more available a modicum of what psychology and psychiatry have contributed to the science of human relations. One can hope that in the near future this use of a few accepted principles can be speeded up by the introduction into high schools and colleges of courses dealing with family relations and child guidance, with emphasis on the preservation and development of human resources in this multiple-choice civilization.

INDEPENDENCE—FOR WHOM?

(*Continued from page 140*)

dressing were no more than was necessary at this age, and that growth in independence should be effected gradually and to suit the needs of the individual child. Thus the "dawdling problem," with which she first came to the Consultation Service, assumed much less importance in her eyes when she learned that the crises and issues to which the fetish of independence can give rise, could be reduced to a minimum by a little friendly encouragement and less rigidity in principles about daily routines.

It was not possible to take up with her many of the implications of her relations to her husband. It

(*Continued on page 160*)

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The *Manual* provides additional references and supplementary material on some of the topics discussed in the text, as well as exercises. $1.00

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INDEPENDENCE—FOR WHOM?

(*Continued from page 158*)

was interested that, when our consultations threatened to come to grips with this relationship, she made excuses for breaking appointments and finally dropped them altogether. A year later, however, she came back. Her appearance and bearing suggested more physical vigor, and her accounts of her handling of her children's problems showed well developed understanding and acceptance of reality. She smiled at some of the complaints she had made about them the year before. "Was he really like that?" she asked when we spoke of Charles' dawdling. Mr. Nelson was taking Charles to school occasionally in the automobile, but most of the time he went by himself, after help at home with his preparations. It was possible that she received from us just the hint of the importance of her marital relations so that she and her husband were able to effect some change for the better. And it is probable that she then had more insight into how her relations with her husband affected their management of the children and could be on her guard against their harmful effects. In this situation, we hold Mrs. Nelson's own fortunate home environment responsible for her capacity to develop rapidly. The Consultation Service had probably entered the situation at a point where the improvement in her insight was an essential step in a process of evolution which was already going forward with a good degree of success.

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READERS' SLANTS

(*Continued from page 149*)

good to go home and show it to Mother. She would only scold and tell her she was a baby if she cried about it. She brought the note to Miss Stanley. Miss Stanley looked at her and said nothing and threw the note into the wastebasket. She did not write an answer.

The children did not say anything about her dress. She ran off alone at recess and stayed in a corner of the basement so they wouldn't look at her. If she could only have gone to them and said, "Just feel my dress." Then they would know that it was a nice dress after all. When it came time for the geography lesson she hoped the teacher would talk about goods again. How proudly she would hold up her hand and say, "What kind of material is in my dress, Teacher?" She did not know the name but it must be a beautiful one. But the teacher did not talk about material at all.

The next day she wore her calico dress.

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